

## ABSTRACT

The present invention guarantees that voice data (and other information types) will switch within a predetermined time period. Systems and methods consistent with the present invention accomplish this guarantee by, among other things, establishing permanent virtual paths between each network element, guaranteeing each voice line a slot in a packet in each frame, employing both octet switching and packet switching, synchronizing the operation of the network elements to a reference clock, and providing several levels of network redundancy.

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